

UNITED STATES LEGATION AT PEKING, CHINA.

L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

TRANSMITTING

A COPY OF A COMMUNICATION FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE
SUBMITTING AN ESTIMATE OF APPROPRIATION TO COMPLETE
THE NEW BUILDINGS FOR THE UNITED STATES LEGATION AT
PEKING, CHINA.

FEBRUARY 10, 1904.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to
be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, February 9, 1904.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith, for the consideration of Congress, copy of a communication from the Secretary of State, of the 8th instant, submitting an estimate of appropriation to complete the new buildings for the United States legation at Peking, China, and for purposes of securing a suitable supply of water, \$50,000.

Respectfully,

L. M. SHAW, *Secretary.*

The PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, February 8, 1904.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith a copy of a dispatch from the minister of the United States to China, with a copy of its accompanying inclosure, requesting an additional appropriation to complete the new buildings for the United States legation at Peking, and for the purpose of procuring a suitable supply of water.

The amount suggested by Mr. Nealy in his report to Mr. Conger, \$25,000, is based upon an estimate of cost of the interior finish of the buildings of \$30,000. It is found necessary, however, to obtain the

interior finish in the United States, and the lowest bid for the work, upon Mr. Nealy's specifications, was \$68,000, delivered in Tientsin, of which fact Mr. Nealy was not informed at the date of his report, as will be seen from the copies of two cablegrams between the Department and the minister, also herewith inclosed.

In accordance with the minister's request, I have the honor to recommend that the sum of \$50,000 be appropriated for the purposes above indicated.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

FRANCIS B. LOOMIS,
Acting Secretary.

The SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

P. S.—I have to state for your information that this dispatch from Mr. Conger has just been received.

No. 1459.]

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Peking, China, December 19, 1903.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose, with my hearty approval, copy of a letter from Mr. Nealy, the architect and superintendent of our new legation buildings, showing the necessity of an additional appropriation in order to complete properly the buildings, construct the necessary approaches, and appropriately lay out and ornament the grounds, and to bore an artesian well.

According to Mr. Nealy's estimates and the contracts for material and labor, the bare buildings, plainly finished and ready for occupancy, can be constructed with the funds already appropriated. But when this is done we will still lack a suitable entrance or gateway, which is usually the most striking and beautiful part of a compound. Ours will be at the head of and looking down a broad and handsome street and should therefore be proportionally imposing.

The buildings, as you have seen from the plans, are being built on three sides of our compound, fronting on an open square, which should be made into a charming little park, with trees, shrubbery, grass, walks, etc.

Proper stables must be built and, most important of all, a suitable water supply must be obtained. It is believed that good artesian water can be found here at a reasonable depth. We are fortunate in having with us Prof. Bailey Willis, of the Geological Survey and Carnegie Institution, who, availing himself of the permission granted through your good offices, will next week begin a thorough survey in order to, as far as possible, definitely determine the question.

Had we been able to begin our work when the first appropriation was made I believe it all could have been completed with the present amount. But materials are much higher now, and Mr. Nealy is building much better buildings than we expected, or than have ever been built in China. Our legation buildings are not so showily constructed, nor nearly so large as the buildings of the other legations, but are incomparably more substantial.

The Russians and French are each expending three times as much as we are, and the Austrian, Italian, and Belgian legations are each costing more than ours. Our buildings, as you are aware, are none of them

larger than is actually necessary. There is not a tree, shrub, or spear of grass in the grounds, and the necessity of getting these started at the earliest possible moment is plainly apparent.

Mr. Nealy is the only man in China who ever succeeded in getting the Chinese to do real foreign work, and therefore ours will be the only real foreign buildings here. If possible, he should be retained on the work until everything is completed, so that the buildings, approaches, grounds, etc., may be finished after a symmetrical and harmonious plan. He has most intelligently and satisfactorily prepared the plans, has instructed the Chinese workmen, is constructing the buildings most successfully and economically, and can much better and more cheaply than any other person plan and execute the approaches and landscape improvements. Hence funds should be provided and authority given in order that all may be finished and he be permitted to return home at the earliest possible moment.

I therefore earnestly urge an additional appropriation by the present Congress of \$25,000 for the purpose named. With this appropriation and Mr. Nealy to complete the work, our new legation will be a credit to our country; without it, the contrast with the other legations will be humiliating.

The progress of the work and the expenditures up to the present time have been fully reported in previous dispatches.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

E. H. CONGER.

Hon. JOHN HAY,

Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

PEKING, CHINA, *December 17, 1903.*

SIR: I most respectfully and earnestly call your attention to the necessity of an additional appropriation by Congress for the final completion of the United States legation buildings now being constructed under my charge.

The amount I found available when I arrived in Peking was not sufficient to properly construct and finish five buildings of the size required, including a chair house and servants' quarters.

My designs for these buildings were made with a view to keeping within the appropriation, and no building was made larger than actually necessary. But there have been various matters of expense in building in China that would not be encountered to such a degree in America. Much of the material entering into the construction has of necessity been brought from America, and the excessive freight rates have eaten into the already meager sum until it becomes a question of doing the interior finish in the cheapest and most unsatisfactory manner unless we receive additional money.

On lumber which cost us \$4,541 in San Francisco, the freightage to Tientsin alone was \$3,550. It was utterly impossible to obtain even a fair quality of lumber in China. The very best submitted was unseasoned, sappy, and full of knots, and would not have kept in shape a year. It was not fit for use.

Neither could I obtain steel or good cast iron from any place short of San Francisco. A few odd shapes of beams were to be had in Shanghai and castings of a very inferior grade, and for this poor stock extortionate prices were asked.

I have utilized, as far as practicable, materials to be had here in Peking, but it would have been a useless waste of money to use either steel, cast iron, or lumber—such as I found in China.

The cheap brick, stone, and labor alone have made it possible for one to build substantial and creditable residences for the United States minister, first secretary, second secretary, Chinese secretary, and a chancery, together with outbuildings. And acting upon the belief that in shabbily constructed public buildings the money is simply wasted, I have used my best endeavors to make good superstructures. But in the interior finishing I must necessarily use the cheapest and most unsatisfactory

materials in order to complete the work within the appropriation. This done, there will be nothing left for approaches or a suitable gate and gatehouse to the American compound.

The brick wall surrounding the compound is cheaply built and suffers by comparison with other walls in the legation quarter. But this is not so vital a question as that of interior finish and approaches.

It has been my earnest desire, since becoming acquainted with conditions here in Peking, to finish our legation buildings—among so many other legation buildings recently erected—in a manner creditable to our Government; and, too, as my designation by the Treasury Department to undertake this work came to me entirely unsolicited, I should like to render it complete and creditable to myself as architect and superintendent.

I should fail to do my full duty if I neglected to call attention to the urgent need of an artesian well. There is not an ounce of water in Peking fit to drink in its natural state. It is impregnated with alkali, and as city upon city have gone to decay upon the site of the present Peking, all city wells receive, through the 20 feet of filled-in rubbish, the seepage from all sorts of dirt and filth.

A well 1,000 or not less than 900 feet deep should be bored. Artesian conditions are good here, and I am satisfied that at about this depth a flowing and inexhaustible well could be obtained. I estimate that such a well could be bored and completed for \$3,000.

I most sincerely hope that you will urge an additional appropriation of \$25,000. This sum, with the balance available, would enable me to complete the entire work, including interior finish, approaches, gatehouse, and artesian well. I estimate the cost as follows:

Approaches, including gatehouse, and brick and stone gateway, main entrance, with wrought-iron inner gates and three-eighths steel-plated heavy exterior gates; wrought-iron gates, 2-leaf, between United States legation and barracks compounds; three-eighths steel-plated gates at south entrance; balustrade and wall connecting all legation buildings at fronts facing compound; six cisterns; removing filled-in rubbish and substituting earth therefor and planting trees and shrubbery; grading and drive-ways	\$11,000
Artesian well and fixtures	3,000
Stables	3,000
Interior finish, additional	8,000
Total	25,000

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

SID. H. NEALY, *Architect in Charge.*

HON. E. H. CONGER, *United States Minister.*

[Telegram.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, February 6, 1904.

CONGER, *Peking:*

Fourteen fifty-nine received. On basis accounts and drafts received here, also proposal of Warren Manufacturing Company, which Roberts recommends, for interior finish of buildings, Department estimates \$50,000 to complete buildings instead estimate \$25,000. Reply by cable.

LOOMIS.

[Telegram.]

PEKING, February 7, 1904.

SECRETARY OF STATE, *Washington:*

We have not yet received bids for interior finish any materials advertised for through Roberts at San Francisco, but if the lowest bid exceeds \$30,000, including freight, the excess must be added to our estimate of \$25,000.

CONGER.